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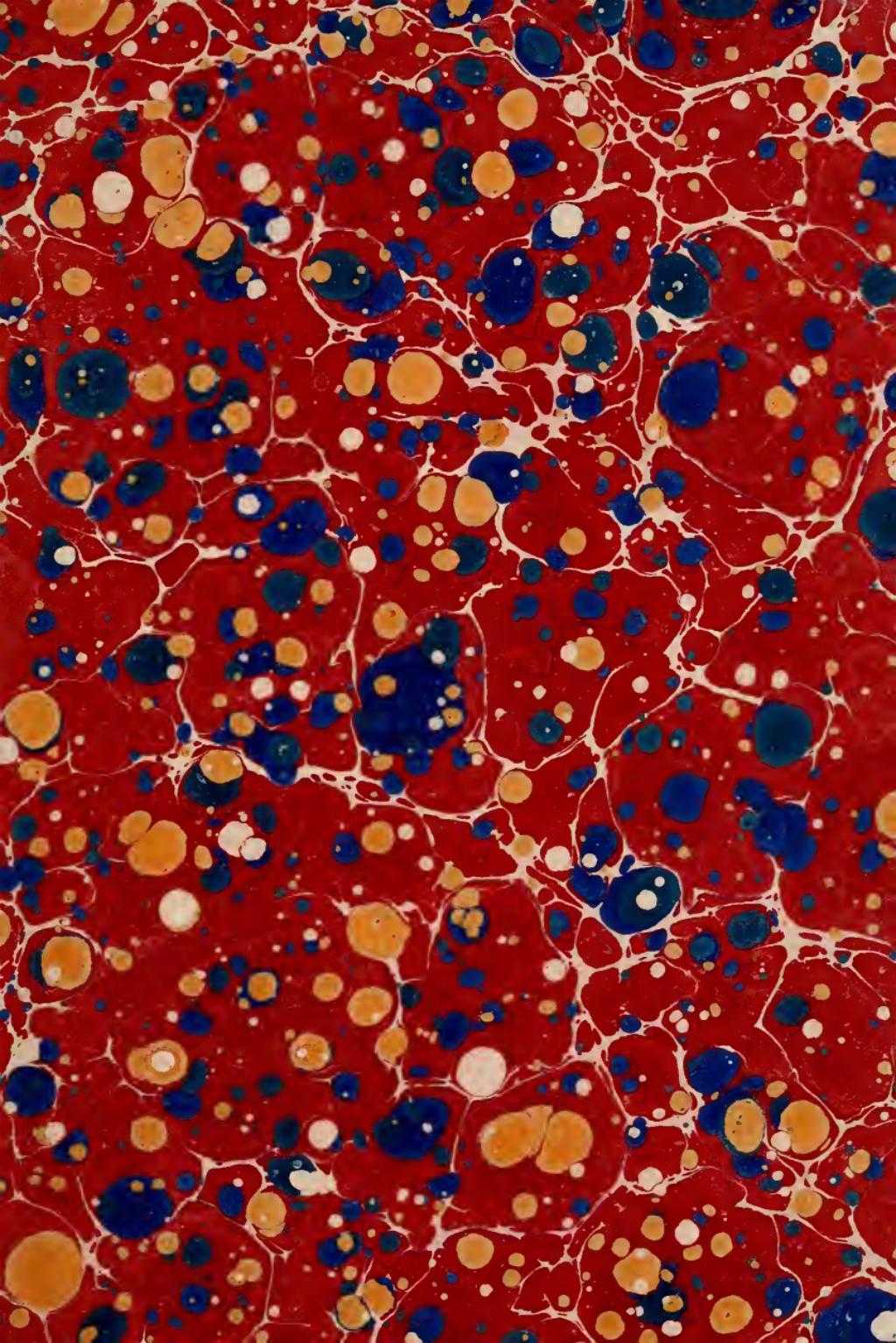


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Domestic Manners

and Private Life

of Sir Walter Scott



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DOMESTIC MANNERS
AND
PRIVATE LIFE
OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT.

BY JAMES HOGG,
THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

WITH A PREFACE AND NOTES BY THE EDITOR.

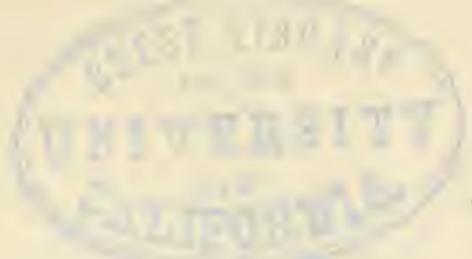
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MAIN)

THE Ettrick Shepherd's "Familiar Anecdotes of Sir Walter Scott," as this little work has sometimes been named, calls for no apologetic preface upon its republication.

The book throws so much light upon the social and more homely side of the Great Novelist's character, and, at the same time, reveals in so amusing a fashion the foibles and egotism of the worthy and justly celebrated "Shepherd," that it has always been exceedingly popular.

In recent years, however, the volume has become so scarce that copies have been only obtainable at a very high price.

The publisher therefore hopes that the present edition will enable those who love a good book in a good form, and who desire to possess the brief but interesting sketch, to add it to their stores.

P R E F A C E.

BY whatever means the following sketch came into the hands of its editor, its paternity is certain ; it fathers itself : none but James Hogg could write it. Indeed it is almost as valuable for the light it throws upon his literary history, as for what it communicates relative to Sir Walter Scott. “Dear Sir Walter,” says James, “ye can never suppose that I belang to your school o’ chivalry ? ye are the king o’ that school, but I’m the king o’ the mountain and fairy school, which is a far higher ane nor yours.” We think we hear Sancho Panza arguing that his governorship of Barrataria is a far higher office than Don Quixote’s knightly power of bestowing kingdoms.

Nevertheless, as we have no doubt, as indeed we are quite certain that Sancho, had he set himself about it, would have furnished

by far the best biography of his master, so we think James's anecdotes by far the most illustrative of Sir Walter's character that we have seen. It is a strange muddy piece of water in which the great poet's image is reflected, still it *is* his image that is reflected. Most scribblers about him have only been trying what fine things they could say. Distorted although honest James does see many things through the medium of his vanity,—nay, given to “leeing” though he sometimes be, in a small way, still his narrative has a smack of nature about it. It gives us much such a notion of Sir Walter as Wedgewood images do of the great originals from which they are copied. Nay, the impression produced upon Hogg will sometimes enable the reader, if he has studied Sir Walter's soul in his own writings, to guess pretty near the truth.

We talk lightly on the subject, but we are far from thinking that this rude chalk sketch has any thing of a caricature about it. Sir Walter is seen to advantage in it. “Making allowance for the wind,” as Locksley says,

we recognise his very lineaments. He is there both in his strength and in his weakness. We see him caracoling across the wild heaths of “the south *hielands*,” laughing with glee as he wades “up to the oxters,” in his fishing excursion, in the exuberance of his spirits, sinking a boat to duck his companions, and thinking it an excellent joke. Then, again, we see him in his hours of depression, from his severe bilious indisposition, a sufficient apology for certain inequalities of temper. In his more happy moods we see him overflowing with kindness, yet always shrewd—always Scotch and cautious. In his less amiable fits we see him annoyed even by the remarks of “The Spy,” or feeling the contradiction of the author of the “Brownie of Bodsbeck.” We see too the mind which, in the details of life, and in the delineation of character, evinced so much practical sense, as much enthralled by the dreams of a by-gone age as the great knight of La Mancha himself.

This is a point in Sir Walter’s character which is well worthy of note; it shows how

the strongest minds, if they “get a *thraw*” in youth, are precisely those that retain it most stubbornly. Sir Walter was sung into a reverence for aristocracy in his cradle. He grew up amid the first fervent glow of the anti-gallican spirit. His sympathies received a bent which his feudalized imagination led him to cherish and exaggerate, instead of seeking to counteract it. He felt the glamour of caste dispersing like mist before the sun, and he sought to wrap the illusive mantle round our hills again. It was this that made him take pleasure in enacting the feudal baron at Abbotsford. It was this that made him cling to those great families with which he claimed clanship. It was this that made him take pride even in a questionable alliance with nobility. It was this that made him happy amid the tom-fooleries of the king’s welcome to Edinburgh. It was this that in his latter day, when his mind was enfeebled by disease, caused him to be haunted by the dread of a violent and bloody revolution. Sir Walter Scott was in some respects, a Horace Walpole on a

greater scale, throwing a heart into his play ; his greater depth of feeling, his more powerful intellect and passions, render that in him tragical which in the other was only ludicrous.

A great degree of coarse, strong, graphic talent will not be denied to the following sketch. Sir Walter is brought bodily before us, with all his peculiarities of look and gesture.

There are some inaccuracies in what is narrated of the minor persons of the drama which must be corrected ; but not yet, (1834) while so many survive whom truths, only valuable as affording an insight into character, might pain. The day may come, however, when certain small circles which attempted to catch a borrowed light from the proximity of a great man, may become matter of history.

DOMESTIC MANNERS
OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT.

IN the following miscellaneous narrative, I do not pretend to give a life of my illustrious and regretted friend. That has been done by half-a-dozen already, and will be given by his son-in-law fully and clearly —the only man who is thoroughly qualified for the task, and is in possession of the necessary documents. The whole that I presume to do, is, after an intimate acquaintance of thirty years, to give a few simple and personal anecdotes, which no man can give but myself. It is well known what Sir Walter was in his study, but these are to show what he was in the parlour, in his family, and among his acquaintances; and, in giving them, I shall in nothing extenuate,

or set down aught through partiality, and as for malice, that is out of the question.

The first time I ever saw Sir Walter was one fine day in the summer of 1801. I was busily engaged working in the field at Ettrick-house, when old Wat Shiel came posting over the water to me and told me that I boud to gang away down to the Ramsey-cleugh as fast as my feet could carry me, for there were some gentlemen there who wanted to see me directly.

“Wha can be at the Ramsey-cleugh that want to see me, Wat?”

“I couldna say, for it wasna me they spake to i’ the bygangin’, but I’m thinking it’s the SHIRRA an’ some o’ his gang.”

I was rejoiced to hear this, for I had seen the first volumes of the “Minstrelsy of the Border,” and had copied a number of ballads from my mother’s recital, or chant rather, and sent them to the editor, preparatory to the publication of a third volume. I accordingly flung down my hoe and hasted away home to put on my Sunday clothes, but before reaching it I met the SHIRRA and Mr

William Laidlaw, coming to visit me. They alighted, and remained in our cottage a considerable time, perhaps nearly two hours, and we were friends on the very first exchange of sentiments. It could not be otherwise, for Scott had no duplicity about him ; he always said as he thought. My mother chanted the ballad of Old Maitlan' to him, with which he was highly delighted, and asked her if she thought it ever had been in print ? And her answer was, "O na, na, sir, it never was printed i' the world, for my brothers an' me learned it an' mony mae frae auld Andrew Moor, and he learned it frae auld Baby Mettlin, wha was house-keeper to the first laird of Tushilaw. She was said to hae been another nor a gude ane, an' there are many queer stories about hersel' ; but O, she had been a grand singer o' auld songs an' ballads."

"The first laird of Tushilaw, Margaret ?" said he, "then that must be a very old story indeed ?"

"Ay, it is that, sir ! It is an auld story ! But mair nor that, excepting George Warton

an' James Stewart, there were never ane o' my sangs prentit till ye prentit them yoursel', an' ye hae spoilt them awthegither. They were made for singing an' no for reading; but ye hae broken the charm now, an' they'll never be sung mair. An' the worst thing of a', they're nouther right spell'd nor right setten down."

"Take ye that, Mr Scott," said Laidlaw.

Scott answered with a hearty laugh, and the quotation of a stanza from Wordsworth, on which my mother gave him a hearty rap on the knee with her open hand, and said, "Ye'll find, however, that it is a' true that I'm tellin' ye." My mother has been too true a prophetess, for from that day to this, these songs, which were the amusement of every winter evening, have never been sung more.

We were all to dine at Ramsey-cleugh with the Messrs Brydon, but Scott and Laidlaw went away to look at some monuments in Ettrick church-yard, and some other old thing, I have forgot what, and I was to follow. On going into the stable-

yard at Ramsey-cleugh I met with Mr Scott's groom, a greater original than his master, at whom I asked if the SHIRRA was come?

“Oo ay, lad, the Shirra's come,” said he. “Are ye the chap that mak's the auld ballads an' sings them sae weel?”

I said, I fancied I was he that he meant, though I could not say that I had ever made ony very auld ballads.

“Ay, then, lad, gang your ways into the house, and speir for the Shirra. They'll let ye see where he is, an' he'll be very glad to see ye, that I'll assure ye o'.”

During the sociality of the evening, the discourse ran very much on the different breeds of sheep, that everlasting drawback on the community of Ettrick Forest. The original black-faced forest breed being always denominated the *short sheep*, and the Cheviot breed the *long sheep*. The disputes at that time ran very high about the practicable profits of each. Mr Scott, who had come into that remote district to visit a bard of Nature's own making, and preserve

what little fragments remained of the country's legendary lore, felt himself rather bored with the everlasting question of the long and short sheep. So, at length, putting on his most serious calculating face, he turned to Mr Walter Brydon, and said, "I am rather at a loss regarding the merits of this *very* important question. How long must a sheep actually measure to come under the denomination of a *long sheep*?"

Mr Brydon, who, in the simplicity of his heart, neither perceived the quiz nor the reproof, fell to answer with great sincerity, "It's the woo', sir ; it's the woo' that mak's the difference, the lang sheep hae the short woo' an' the short sheep hae the lang thing, an' these are just kind o' names we gie them, ye see."

Laidlaw got up a great guffaw, on which Scott could not preserve his face of strict calculation any longer ; it went gradually awry, and a hearty laugh followed. When I saw the very same words repeated near the beginning of the Black Dwarf, how could I be mistaken of the author ? It is

true that Johnnie Ballantyne swore me into a nominal acquiescence to the contrary for several years, but in my own mind I could never get the better of that and several other similar coincidences.

The next day we went off, five in number, to visit the wilds of Rankleburn, to see if, on the farms of Buccleugh and Mount Comyn, the original possession of the Scotts, there were any relics of antiquity which could mark out the original residence of the chiefs whose distinction it was to become the proprietors of the greater part of the border districts. We found no remains of either tower or fortalice, save an old chapel and church-yard, and the remnants of a kiln-mill and mill-dam, where corn never grew, but where, as old Satchells very appropriately says :—

“ Had heather bells been corn o’ the best,
The Buccleugh mill would have had a noble grist.”

It must have been used for grinding the chief’s black mails, which it is well known were all paid to him in kind; and an immense deal of victual is still paid to him

in the same way, the origin of which no man knows.

Besides having been mentioned by Satchells, the most fabulous historian that ever wrote, there was a remaining tradition in the country that there was a font-stone of blue marble, out of which the ancient heirs of Buccleugh were baptized, covered up among the ruins of the old church. Mr Scott was curious to see if we could discover it, but on going among the ruins where the altar was known to have been, we found the rubbish at that spot dug out to the foundation, we knew not by whom, but it was manifest that the font had either been taken away, or that there was none there. I never heard since that it had ever been discovered by any one.

As there appeared, however, to have been a sort of recess in the eastern gable, we fell a-turning over some loose stones, to see if the baptismal font was not there, when we came to one-half of a small pot encrusted thick with rust. Mr Scott's eye brightened, and he swore it was part of an ancient con-

secerated helmet. Laidlaw, however, fell a picking and scratching with great patience until at last he came to a layer of pitch inside, and then with a malicious sneer, he said, "The truth is, Mr Scott, it's nouther mair nor less than an auld tar-pot, that some of the farmers hae been buisting their sheep out o' i' the kirk lang syne." Sir Walter's shaggy eye-brows dipped deep over his eyes, and, suppressing a smile, he turned and strode away as fast as he could, saying, that "we had just rode all the way to see that there was nothing to *be* seen."

He was, at that time, a capital horseman, and was riding on a terribly high-spirited grey nag, which had the perilous fancy of leaping every drain, rivulet, and ditch that came in our way. The consequence was, that he was everlastingly bogging himself, while sometimes the rider kept his seat in spite of the animal's plunging, and at other times he was obliged to extricate himself the best way he could. In coming through a place called the Milsey Bog, I said to him, "Mr Scott, that's the maddest de'il of a beast

I ever saw. Can you no gar him tak' a wee mair time? he's just out o' ae lair intil another wi' ye."

"Ay," said he, "he and I have been very often like the Pechs (*Picts*) these two days past, we could stand straight up and tie the latchets of our shoes." I did not understand the allusion, nor do I yet, but those were his words.

We visited the old castles of Tushilaw and Thirlstane, dined and spent the afternoon and the night with Mr Brydon of Crosslee. Sir Walter was all the while in the highest good humour, and seemed to enjoy the range of mountain solitude which we traversed, exceedingly. Indeed, I never saw him otherwise in the fields. On the rugged mountains, and even toiling in the Tweed to the waist, I have seen his glee surpass that of all other men. His memory, or perhaps I should say, his recollection, was so capacious, so sterling and minute, that a description of what I have witnessed regarding it would not gain credit. When in Edinburgh, and even at Abbotsford, I was often

obliged to apply to him for references in my historical tales, that so I might relate nothing of noblemen and gentlemen that was not strictly true. I never found him at fault. In that great library, he not only went uniformly straight to the book, but ere ever he stirred from the spot, turned up the page which contained the information I wanted. I saw a pleasant instance of this retentiveness of memory recorded lately of him, regarding Campbell's *PLEASURES OF HOPE*, but I think I can relate a more extraordinary one.

He, and Skene of Rubislaw, and I were out one night about midnight, leistering kippers in Tweed,* about the end of January, not long after the opening of the river for fishing, which was then on the tenth, and Scott having a great range of the river himself, we went up to the side of the Rough haugh of Elibank; but when we came to

* Sir Walter alludes in the notes to his collected works by Cadell, to his "fire hunting" expeditions. This narrative enables us to fill up the outline of one of them.

kindle our light, behold our peat was gone out. This was a terrible disappointment ; but to think of giving up our sport was out of the question, so we had no other shift save to send Rob Fletcher all the way through the darkness, the distance of two miles, for another fiery peat.

The night was mild, calm, and as dark as pitch, and while Fletcher was absent we three sat down on the brink of the river, on a little green sward which I never will forget, and Scott desired me to sing them my ballad of “*Gilman’s-cleugh*.” Now, be it remembered, that this ballad had never been printed ; I had merely composed it by rote, and, on finishing it three years before, had sung it once over to Sir Walter. I began it, at his request, but at the eighth or ninth stanza I stuck in it, and could not get on with another verse, on which he began it again and recited it every word from beginning to end. It being a very long ballad, consisting of eighty-eight stanzas, I testified my astonishment, knowing that he had never heard it but once, and even then did

not appear to be paying particular attention. He said he had been out with a pleasure party as far as the opening of the Frith of Forth, and, to amuse the company, he had recited both that ballad and one of Southey's (*The Abbot of Aberbrothock*), both of which ballads he had only heard once from their respective authors, and he believed he recited them both without misplacing a word.

Rob Fletcher came at last, and old Mr Laidlaw of the Peel with him, carrying a lantern, and into the river we plunged in a frail bark which had suffered some deadly damage in bringing up. We had a fine blazing light, and the salmon began to appear in plenty, "turning up sides like swine;" * but wo be to us, our boat began instantly to manifest a disposition to sink, and in a few minutes we reached Gleddie's Weal, the deepest pool in all that part of Tweed. When Scott saw the terror that his neighbour old Peel was in, he laughed till the tears blinded his eyes. Always the more mischief the better sport for him. "For

* *Guy Mannering.*

God's sake, push her to the side!" roared Peel. "Oh, she goes fine," said Scott.

"'An' gin the boat war bottomless,
An' seven miles to row.'"

A verse of an old song ; and during the very time he was reciting these lines, down went the boat to the bottom, plunging us all into the Tweed, over head and ears. It was no sport to me at all, for I had no change of raiment at Ashiesteel, but that was a glorious night for Scott, and the next day was no worse.

I remember leaving my own cottage here one morning with him, accompanied by my dear friend, William Laidlaw, and Sir Adam Ferguson, to visit the tremendous solitudes of Loch-Skene and the Grey-mare's-tail. I conducted them through that wild region by a path, which, if not rode by Clavérs, as reported, never was rode by another gentleman. Sir Adam rode inadvertently into a gulf and got a sad fright, but Sir Walter, in the very worst paths, never dismounted, save at Loch-Skene to take some dinner. We

went to Moffat that night, where we met with lady Scott and Sophia, and such a day and night of glee I never witnessed. Our very perils were to him matter of infinite merriment; and then, there was a short tempered boot-boy at the inn, who wanted to pick a quarrel with him for some of his sharp retorts, at which Scott laughed till the water ran over his cheeks.

I was disappointed in never seeing some incident in his subsequent works, laid in a scene resembling the rugged solitude around Loch-Skene, for I never saw him survey any with so much attention. A single serious look at a scene generally filled his mind with it, and he seldom took another. But, here, he took the names of all the hills, their altitudes, and relative situations with regard to one another, and made me repeat all these several times. Such a scene may occur in some of his works which I have not seen, and I think it will, for he has rarely ever been known to interest himself either in a scene or a character, which did not appear afterwards in its most striking peculiarities.

There are not above three people now living, who, I think, knew Sir Walter better, and who understood his character better than I did, and I once declared that if I outlived him, I should draw a mental and familiar portrait of him ; the likeness of which to the original could not be disputed. In the mean time, this is only a reminiscence, in my own homely way, of an illustrious friend among the mountains. That revered friend is now gone, and the following pages are all that I deem myself at liberty to publish concerning him.

The enthusiasm with which he recited and spoke of our ancient ballads, during that first tour through the Forest, inspired me with a determination immediately to begin and imitate them, which I did, and soon grew tolerably good at it. I dedicated “The Mountain Bard” to him :—

Bless'd be his generous heart, for aye
He told me where the relic lay.
Pointed my way with ready will,
Afar on Ettrick's wildest hill ;
Watch'd my first notes with curious eye,
And wonder'd at my ministrelsy ;

He little ween'd a parent's tongue
Such strains had o'er my cradle sung.

The only foible I ever could discover in the character of Sir Walter, was a too strong leaning to the old aristocracy of the country. His devotion for titled rank was prodigious, and, in such an illustrious character, altogether out of place. It amounted almost to adoration, and, not to mention the numerous nobility whom I have met at his own house and in his company, I shall give a few instances of that sort of feeling in him to which I allude.

Although he, of course, acknowledged Buccleugh as the head and chief of the whole clan of Scott, yet he always acknowledged Harden as his immediate chieftain, and head of that powerful and numerous sept of the name, and Sir Walter was wont often to relate, how he, and his father before him, and his grandfather before that, always kept their Christmas with Harden in acknowledgment of their vassalage. This he used to tell with a degree of exultation, which I always thought must have been

astounding to every one who heard it ; as if his illustrious name did not throw a blaze of glory on the house of Harden a hundred times more than that van of old border barbarians, however brave, could throw over him.

He was, likewise, descended from the chiefs of Haliburton and Rutherford, on the maternal side ; and to the circumstance of his descent from these three houses he adverted so often, mingling their arms in his escutcheon, that to me, alas ! who, to this day, could never be brought to discover any distinction in ranks, save what was constituted by talents or moral worth, it appeared perfectly ludicrous, thinking, as no man could help thinking, of the halo which his genius shed over those families, while he only valued himself as a descendant of theirs.

I may mention one other instance, at which I was both pleased and mortified. We chanced to meet at a great festival at Bowhill, when Duke Charles was living and in good health. The company being very numerous, there were two tables set in the

dining-room, one along and one across. They were nearly of the same length, but at the one along the middle of the room all the ladies were seated mixed alternately with gentlemen, and at this table all were noble, save, if I remember aright, Sir Adam Ferguson, whose everlasting good humour insures him a passport into every company. But I, having had some chat with the ladies before dinner, and always rather a flattered pet with them, imagined they could not possibly live without me, and placed myself among them. But I had a friend at the cross table, at the head of the room, who saw better. Sir Walter, who presided there, arose, and addressing the Duke of Buccleugh, requested of him, as a particular favour and obligation, that he would allow Mr Hogg to come to his table, for that, in fact, he could not do without him, and, moreover, he added,

If ye reave the Hoggs of Fauldshape,
Ye harry Harden's gear.

I, of course, got permission, and retired to Sir Walter's table, when he placed me on

the right hand of the gentleman on his right hand, who, of course, was Scott of Harden. And yet, notwithstanding the broad insinuation about the Hoggs of Fauldshope, I sat beside that esteemed gentleman the whole night, and all the while took him for an English clergyman! I knew there were some two or three clergymen of rank there, connected with the family, and I took Harden for one of them; and though I was mistaken, I still say, he ought to have been one. I was dumbfounded next day, when the Duke told me, that my divine whom I thought so much of, was Scott of Harden, for I would have liked so well to have talked with him about old matters, my forefathers having been vassals under that house, on the lands of Fauldshope, for more than two centuries, and were only obliged to change masters with the change of proprietors. It was doubtless owing to this connection, that my father had instilled into my youthful mind so many traditions relating to the house of Harden, of which I have made considerable use.

But the anecdote which I intended to relate, before my ruling passion of egotism came across me, was this:—When the dinner came to be served, Sir Walter refused to let a dish be set on our table,* which had not been first presented to the Duke and the nobility. “No, no!” said he. “This is literally a meeting of the Clan and its adherents, and we shall have one dinner in the feudal style, it may be but for once in our lives.”

As soon as the Duke perceived this whim, he admitted of it, although I believe the dishes were merely set down and lifted again. In the meantime, the venison and beef stood on the sideboard, which was free to all, so that we were all alike busy from the beginning. At the end of our libations, and before we parted, some time in the

* Sir Walter, practical, and with a strong grasp of real life in his poetry, was always endeavouring to live in a world of fiction. His Abbotsford, the dinner here narrated, and the reception of the king at Edinburgh, were continuous efforts to transplant himself into another age—not unlike children playing Crusaders, Reavers, Robinson Crusoes, &c.

course of the morning, the Duke set his one foot on the table and the other on his chair, requesting us all to do the same, with which every man complied, and in that position he sang, “Johnnie Cope are ye wauken yet?” while all joined in the chorus. Sir Walter set his weak foot on the table and kept his position steadily, apparently more firm than when he stood on the floor, joining in the chorus with his straightforward bass voice, with great glee, enjoying the whole scene exceedingly, as he did every scene of hilarity that I ever saw. But though a more social companion never was born, he never filled himself drunk. He took always his wine after dinner, and, at least for upwards of twenty years, a little gin toddy after supper, but he was uniformly moderate in eating and drinking. He liked a good breakfast, but often confessed that he never knew what a good breakfast was till he came to my cottage, but he should never want it again, and he kept steadily to his resolution.

He was a most extraordinary being. How

or when he composed his voluminous works, no man could tell. When in Edinburgh, he was bound to the Parliament House all the forenoon. He never was denied to any living, neither lady nor gentleman, poor nor rich, and he never seemed discomposed when intruded on, but always good-humoured and kind. Many a time have I been sorry for him, for I have remained in his study, in Castle Street, in hopes to get a quiet word of him, and witnessed the admission of ten intruders, forby myself. Noblemen, gentlemen, painters, poets, and players, all crowded to Sir Walter, not to mention booksellers and printers, who were never absent, but these spoke to him privately. When at Abbotsford, for a number of years his house was almost constantly filled with company, for there was a correspondence carried on, and always as one freight went away, another came. It was impossible not to be sorry for the time of such a man thus broken in upon. I felt it exceedingly, and once, when I went down by particular invitation to stay a fortnight, I had not the heart to

stay any longer than three days, and that space was generally the length of my visits. But Sir Walter never was discomposed. He was ready, as soon as breakfast was over, to accompany his guests wherever they chose to go, to stroll in the wood, or take a drive up to Yarrow, or down to Melrose or Dryburgh, where his revered ashes now repose. He was never out of humour when well, but when ill, he was very cross, he being subject to a bilious complaint of the most dreadful and severe nature, accompanied by pangs the most excruciating,* and when under the influence of that malady it was not easy to speak to him, and I found it always the best plan to keep a due distance. But then his sufferings had been most intense, for he told me one day when he was sitting as yellow as a primrose, that roasted salt had been prescribed to lay on

* This fact, which we do not recollect to have seen noticed before, accounts for some inequalities of temper we have heard laid to Sir Walter's charge—his uncourteous treatment of Lord Holland, &c. Before blaming any one for such freaks, we ought always to inquire into the state of the stomach.

the pit of his stomach, which was applied, and the next day it was discovered that his breast was all in a blister, and the bosom of his shirt burnt to an izel, and yet he never felt it !

But to return to our feast at Bowhill, from which I have strangely wandered, although the best of the fun is yet to come. When the Duke retired to the drawing-room he deputed Sir Alexander Don, who sat next him, to his chair. We had long before been all at one table. Sir Alexander instantly requested a bumper out of champagne glasses to the Duke's health, with all the honours. It was instantly complied with, and every one drank it to the bottom. Don then proposed the following of so good an example as his Grace had set us, and accordingly we were all obliged to mount our chairs again, and setting one foot on the table, sing Johnnie Cope over again. Every one at least attempted it, and Sir Alexander sang the song in most capital style. The Scotts, and the Elliots, and some Tait's, now began to fall with terrible thuds on the

floor; but Sir Walter still kept his station as steady as a rock, and laughed immoderately. But this was too good fun to be given up. The Marquis of Queensberry, who was acting as croupier, said, that such a loyal and social Border Clan could never separate without singing "God save the King," and, that though we had drunk to his health at the beginning, we behoved to do it again, and join in the anthem. We were obliged to mount our chairs again, and in the same ticklish position, sing the King's Anthem. Down we went, one after another. Nay, they actually fell in heaps above each other. I fell off and took a prodigious run to one corner of the room, against which I fell, which created great merriment. There were not above six stood the test this time, out of from thirty to forty. Sir Walter did, and he took all the latter bumpers off to the brim. He had a good head more ways than one.

There was no man who ever testified more admiration, and even astonishment, than he did, at my poetical productions, both songs

and poems, and sometimes in very high terms before his most intimate friends. It was somewhat different with regard to my prose works, with which he uniformly found fault, and always with the disagreeable adjunction, "how good they might have been made with a little pains." When *The Three Perils of Man* was first put to the press, he requested to see the proof slips, Ballantyne having been telling him something about the work. They were sent to him on the instant, and on reading them, he sent expressly for me, as he wanted to see me and speak with me about my forthcoming work. We being both at that time residing in Edinburgh, I attended directly, and I think I remember every word that passed. Indeed, so implicit was my dependence on his friendship, his good taste, and judgment, that I never forgot a sentence nor a word that he said to me about my own works, but treasured them up in my heart.

"Well, Mr Hogg, I have read over your proofs with a great deal of pleasure, and, I confess, with some little portion of dread.

In the first place, the meeting of the two princesses at Castle Weiry is excellent. I have not seen any modern thing more truly dramatic. The characters are strongly marked, old Peter Chisholme's in particular. Ah! man, what you might have made of that, with a little more refinement, care, and patience!—But it is always the same with you, just hurrying on from one vagary to another, without consistency or proper arrangement."

"Dear Mr Scott, a man canna do the thing that he canna do."

"Yes, but you *can* do it. Witness your poems, where the arrangements are all perfect and complete; but in your prose works, with the exception of a few short tales, you seem to write merely by random, without once considering what you are going to write about."

"You are not often wrong, Mr Scott, and you were never righter in your life than you are now, for when I write the first line of a tale or novel, I know not what the second is to be, and it is the same way in every

sentence throughout. When my tale is traditionary, the work is easy, as I then see my way before me, though the tradition be ever so short ; but in all my prose works of imagination, knowing little of the world, I sail on without star or compass."

"I am sorry to say, that this is too often apparent. But, in the next place, and it was on that account I sent for you, do you not think there is some little danger in making Sir Walter Scott, of Buccleuch, the hero of this wild extravagant tale ?"

"The devil a bit."

"Well, I think differently. The present chief is your patron, your sincere friend, and your enthusiastic admirer. Would it not then be a subject of regret, not only to yourself and me, but to all Scotland, should you, by any rash adventure, forfeit the countenance and friendship of so good and so great a man ?"

"There's nae part o' that at a', Mr Scott. The Sir Walter of my tale is a complete hero throughout, and is never made to do a thing, or say a thing, of which his descendant, our present chief, winna be proud."

"I am not quite sure of that. Do you not think you have made him a rather too selfish character?"

"O, ay; but ye ken they were a' a little gi'en that gate, else how could they hae gotten haud o' a' the south o' Scotland, naebody kens how."

Sir Walter then took to himself a hearty laugh, and then pronounced these very words. "Well, Hogg, you appear to me just now like a man dancing upon a rope or wire, at a great height; if he is successful and finishes his dance in safety, he has accomplished no great matter; but if he makes a slip, he gets a devil of a fall."

"Never say another word about it, Mr Scott, I'm satisfied; the designation shall be changed throughout, before I either eat or sleep." And I kept my word.

I went, when in Edinburgh, at his particular request, two or three days every week to breakfast with him, as I was then always sure of an hour's conversation with him, before he went to the Parliament House; and I often went for many days successively, as I

soon found it was impossible to be in his company without gaining advantage. But there was one Sunday morning I found him in very bad humour indeed. He was sitting at his desk in his study at Castle Street, and when I went in, he looked up to me with a visage as stern as that of a judge going to pronounce sentence on a malefactor, and at the same time, he neither rose nor saluted me, which was always his wont, and the first words that he addressed to me were these, “Mr Hogg, I am very angry with you; I tell you it plainly, and I think I have a right to be so. I demand, sir, an explanation of a sentence in your *Spy* of yesterday.”

Knowing perfectly well to what sentence he alluded, my peasant blood began to boil, and I found it rushing to my head and face most violently, as I judged myself by far the most aggrieved. “Then I must demand an explanation from you, Mr Scott,” said I. “Were you the author of the article alluded to in my paper, which places you at the head and me at the tail, nay, as the very dregs of all the poets of Britain?”

“What right have you, sir, to suppose that I was the author of it?” said he in a perfect rage.

“Nay, what right had *you* to suppose that you were the author of it, that you are taking it so keenly to yourself?” said I. “The truth is, that when I wrote the remarks, I neither knew nor cared who was the author of the article alluded to; but before the paper went to press, I believed it to have been Mr Southey, for Johnnie Ballantyne told me so, and swore to it; but if the feather suits your cap, you are perfectly welcome to it.”

“Very well, Hogg,” said he, “that is spoken like a man, and like yourself; I am satisfied. I thought it was meant as personal to me in particular. But never mind. We are friends again as usual. Sit down and we will go to our breakfast together immediately, and it shall never more be mentioned between us.”

Mr Southey long afterwards told me that he was not the author of that article, and he believed it to have been written by Scott.

If it was, it was rather too bad of him ; but he never said it was not his. It was a review of modern literature in the Edinburgh Annual Register. As some readers of these anecdotes may be curious to see the offensive passage in the SPY, I shall here extract it ; that work being long ago extinct, and only occasionally mentioned by myself, as a parent will sometimes mention the name of a dear, unfortunate lost child, who has been forgotten by all the world beside.

“ The papers which have given the greatest personal offence are those of Mr Shuffleton, which popular clamour obliged the editor reluctantly to discontinue. Of all the poets and poetesses whose works are there emblematically introduced, one gentleman alone stood the test, and his firmness was even by himself attributed to forgiveness. All the rest, male and female, tossed up their noses, and pronounced the writer an ignorant and an incorrigible barbarian. THE SPY hereby acknowledges himself the author of these papers, and adheres to the figurative characters he has

there given of the poetical works of these authors. He knows, that, in a future edition, it is expected they are all to be altered or obliterated. They never shall ! Though the entreaties of respected friends prevailed on him to relinquish a topic which was his favourite one, what he has published, he has published, and no private consideration shall induce him to an act of such manifest servility as that of making a renunciation. Those who are so grossly ignorant as to suppose the figurative characteristics of the poetry, as having the smallest reference to the personal characters of the authors, are below reasoning with. And since it has of late become fashionable with some great poets, to give an estimate of their great powers in periodical works of distinction, surely others have an equal right to give likewise their estimates of the works of such bards. It is truly amusing to see how artfully a gentleman is placed at the head of a school of poetry, and one who is perhaps his superior at the tail of it. How he can make himself to appear as the great-

est genius that ever existed. With what address he can paint his failings as beauties, and depict his greatest excellences as slight defects, finding fault only with those parts which every one must admire. The design is certainly an original, though not a very creditable one. Great authors cannot remain always concealed, let them be as cautious as they will ; the smallest incident often assisting curiosity in the discovery."—
Spy for August 24th, 1811.

This last sentence, supposing Sir Walter to have been the author, which I now suspect he was, certainly contained rather too broad and too insolent a charge, to be passed over with impunity. When I wrote it, I believed he was ; but had I continued to believe so, I would not have called on him the next morning after the publication of the paper. Luckily, before putting the paper to press, I waited on Mr John Ballantyne, and asked him who was the author of that insolent paper in his *Annual Register*, which placed me as the dregs of all the poets in Britain.

"O, the paper was sent to our office by

Southey," said he, "you know he is editor, and part proprietor of the work, and we never think of objecting to any thing that he sends us. Neither my brother James nor I ever read the article until it was published, and we both thought it was a good one."

Now this was a story beside the truth, for I found out afterwards that Mr James Ballantyne had read the paper from manuscript, in a library, long before its publication, where it was applauded in the highest terms. I, however, implicitly believed it, as I have done every body all my life. At that period, the whole of the aristocracy and literature of our country were set against me, and determined to keep me down ; nay, to crush me to a nonentity. Thanks be to God ! I have lived to see the sentiments of my countrymen completely changed.

There was once more, and only once, that I found Sir Walter in the same querulous humour with me. It was the day after the publication of my *Brownie of Bodsbeck*. I called on him after his return from the

Parliament House, on pretence of asking his advice about some very important affair, but, in fact, to hear his sentiments of my new work. His shaggy eye-brows were hanging very low down, a bad prelude, which I knew too well. “I have read through your new work, Mr Hogg,” said he, “and must tell you downright plainly, as I always do, that I like it very ill—very ill indeed.”

“What for, Mr Scott?”

“Because it is a false and unfair picture of the times and the existing characters; altogether an exaggerated and unfair picture!”

“I dinna ken, Mr Scott. It is the picture I have been bred up in the belief o’ sin’ ever I was born, and I had it frae them whom I was most bound to honour and believe. An’ mair nor that, there is not one single incident in the tale—not one—which I cannot prove from history, to be literally and positively true. I was obliged sometimes to change the situations to make one part coalesce with another; but in no one instance have I related a story of a

cruelty or a murder which is not literally true. An' that's a great deal mair than you can say for your tale o' Auld Mortality."

"You are overshooting the mark now, Mr Hogg. I wish it were my tale. But it is *not* with regard to that, that I find fault with your tale at all, but merely because it is an unfair and partial picture of the age in which it is laid."

"Na, I shoudna hae said it was *your* tale, for ye hae said to your best friends that it was not, an' there I was wrang. Ye may hinder a man to speak, but ye canna hinder him to think, an' I can speak at the thinking. But whoever wrote Auld Mortality, kenning what I ken, an' what ye ken, I wadna wonder at you being ill-pleased with my tale, if ye thought it written as a counterpoise to that; but ye ken weel it was written lang afore the other was heard of."

"Yes, I know that a part of it was in manuscript last year; but I suspect it has been greatly exaggerated since."

"As I am an honest man, sir, there has not been a line altered or added, that I

remember of. The original copy was printed. Mr Blackwood was the only man, beside yourself, who saw it. He read it painfully, which I now know you did not, and I appeal to him."

"Well, well. As to its running counter to Old Mortality, I have nothing to say. Nothing in the world. I only tell you, that with the exception of Old Nanny, the crop-eared Covenanter, who is by far the best character you ever drew in your life, I dislike the tale exceedingly, and assure you it is a distorted, a prejudiced, and untrue picture of the Royal party."

"It is a devilish deal truer than yours though, and on that ground I make my appeal to my country."

And with that I rose and was going off in a huff.

"No, no! stop!" cried he, "you are not to go, and leave me again in bad humour. You ought not to be offended with me for telling you my mind freely."

"Why, to be sure, it is the greatest folly in the world for me to be sae. But ane's

beuks are like his bairns, he disna like to hear them spoken ill o', especially when he is conscious that they dinna deserve it."

Sir Walter, then, after his customary short good-humoured laugh, repeated a proverb about the Gordons, which was exceedingly *a propos* to my feelings at the time ; but all that I can do, I cannot remember it, though I generally remembered every thing that he said of any import. He then added, "I wish you to take your dinner with me to-day. There will be nobody with us but James Ballantyne, who will read you something new, and I wanted to ask you particularly about something which has escaped me at this moment. Ay, it was this. Pray had you any tradition on which you founded that ridiculous story about the Hunt of Eildon ?"

"Yes, I had," said I, "as far as the two white hounds are concerned, and of the one pulling the poisoned cup twice out of the king's hand when it was at his lips."

"That is very extraordinary," said he, for the very first time I read it, it struck

me I had heard something of the same nature before ; but how or where I cannot comprehend. I think it must have been when I was on the nurse's knee, or lying in the cradle ; yet I was sure I had heard it. It is a very ridiculous story, that, Mr Hogg. The most ridiculous of any modern story I ever read. What a pity it is that you are not master of your own capabilities, for that tale might have been made a good one."

It was always the same on the publication of any of my prose works. When *The Three Perils of Man* appeared, he read me a long lecture on my extravagance in Demonology, and assured me I had ruined one of the best tales in the world. It is manifest, however, that the tale had made no ordinary impression on him, as he subsequently copied the whole of the main plot into his tale of Castle Dangerous.

Sir Walter's conversation was always amusing, always interesting. There was a conciseness, a candour and judiciousness in it, which never was equalled. His anecdotes were without end, and I am almost certain

they were all made off-hand, for I never heard one of them either before or after. His were no Joe Miller's jokes. The only time ever his conversation was to me perfectly uninteresting, was with Mr John Murray, of Albemarle-Street, London. Their whole conversation was about noblemen, parliamenters, and literary men of all grades, none of which I had ever heard of or cared about ; but every one of which Mr Murray seemed to know, with their characters, society, and propensities. This information Sir Walter seemed to drink in with as much zest as I did his whisky toddy, and this conversation was carried on for two days and two nights, with the exception of a few sleeping hours ; and there I sat beside them, all the while, like a perfect stump ; a sheep who never got in a word, not even a bleat. I wish I had the same opportunity again.

I first met with Sir Walter at my own cottage in the wilds of Ettrick Forest, as above narrated, and I then spent two days and two nights in his company. When we

parted, he shook my hand most heartily, and invited me to his cottage on the banks of the North Esk, above Lasswade, “ By all means come and see me,” said he, “ and I will there introduce you to my wife. She is a foreigner, as dark as a blackberry, and does not speak the broad Scots so well as you and me ; of course, I don’t expect you to admire her much, but I shall assure you of a hearty welcome.”

I went and visited him the first time I had occasion to be in Edinburgh, expecting to see Mrs Scott a kind of half black-a-moor, whom our sheriff had married for a great deal of money. I knew nothing about her, and had never heard of her, save from his own description ; but the words, “ as dark as a blackberry,” had fixed her colour indelibly on my mind. Judge of my astonishment when I was introduced to one of the most beautiful and handsome creatures, as Mrs Scott, whom I had ever seen in my life. A brunette, certainly, with raven hair and large black eyes, but in my estimation a perfect beauty. I found her

quite affable, and she spoke English very well, save that she put always the *d* for the *th*, and left the aspiration of the *h* out altogether. She called me all her life, Mr Og. I understood perfectly well what she said, but for many years I could not make her understand what I said ; she had frequently to ask an explanation from her husband, and I must say this of Lady Scott, though it was well known how jealous she was of the rank of Sir Walter's visitors, yet I was all my life received with the same kindness as if I had been a relation or one of the family, although one of his most homely daily associates. But there were many others, both poets and play-actors, whom she received with no very pleasant countenance. Jeffrey and his satellites she could not endure, and there was none whom she disliked more than Brougham, for what reason I do not know, but I have heard her misca' him terribly, as well as "dat body Jeffrey." It might be owing to some reasons which I did not know about. After the review of Marmion appeared, she never would

speak to Jeffrey again, for, though not a lady who possessed great depth of penetration, she knew how to appreciate the great powers of her lord, from the beginning, and despised all those who ventured to deprecate them.

I have heard Sir Walter tell an anecdote of this review of *Marmion*.* As he and Jeffrey, Southey, Curwin, and some other body, I have forgotten who, were sailing on Derwent water, at Keswick, in Cumberland, one fine day, Mr Jeffrey, to amuse the party, took from his pocket the manuscript of the review of *Marmion*, and read it throughout. This, I think, was honest in Jeffrey, but the rest of the company were astonished at his insolence, and at some passages did not know where to look. When he had finished,

* We have heard this story with a variation. Jeffrey, in his review of *Marmion*, while praising the author's talents highly, introduced some censure. Going to sup with Scott, he, in the honesty of his heart, took the proof-sheets of the review with him and read them aloud. Mr Jeffrey's manner is unfortunate, and he was considerably Scott's junior. Scott and all his friends (his wife in particular) took the matter in high dudgeon. The review was not modified.

he said, "Well, Scott, what think you of it? what shall be done about it?" "At all events, I have taken my resolution what to do," said Scott, "I'll just sink the boat." The review was a little modified after that.

But to return to Lady Scott, she is cradled in my remembrance, and ever shall be, as a sweet, kind, and affectionate creature. When any of the cottagers or retainers about Abbotsford grew ill, they durst not tell her, as it generally made her worse than the sufferers, and I have heard of her groaning, and occasionally weeping for a whole day and a good part of the night for an old tailor who was dying and leaving a small helpless family behind him. Her daughter Anne was very like her, in the contour and expression of her countenance. Who was Lady Scott originally? I really wish anybody would tell me, for surely somebody must know. There is a veil of mystery hung over that dear lady's birth and parentage, which I have been unable to see through or lift up; and there have been more lies told to me about it

and even published in all the papers of Britain, by those who *ought* to have known, than ever was told about those of any woman that ever was born. I have, however, a few cogent reasons for believing that the present Sir Walter's grandfather was a nobleman of very high rank.

Like other young authors, Sir Walter was rather vain of his early productions, and liked to make them the subject of conversation. He recited *Glenfinlas* one day to me on horseback, long before its publication. He read me also the *Lay of the Last Ministrel*, from manuscript ; at least, he and William Erskine, (Lord Kineder,) and James Ballantyne, read it, canto about. He always preferred their readings to his own. Not so with me. I could always take both the poetry and the story along with me better from his reading than any other body's whatsoever. Even with his deep-toned bass voice, and his Berwick burr, he was a far better reader than he was sensible of. Every thing that he read was like his discourse, it always made an im-

pression. He likewise read me *Marmion* before it was published, but I think it was then in the press, for a part of it, at least, was read from proof slips and sheets, with corrections on the margin. The *Marmion* manuscript was a great curiosity. I wonder what became of it. It was all written off-hand, in post letters, from Ashiesteel, Mainsforth, Rokeby, and London. The readings of *Marmion* began on his own part. I had newly gone to Edinburgh, and knew nothing about the work—had never heard of it. But the next morning after my arrival, on going to breakfast with him, he sought out a proof sheet, and read me his description of my beloved St Mary's Lake, in one of his introductions, I think to canto second, to ask my opinion, as he said, of its correctness, as he had never seen the scene but once. I said, there never was anything more graphic written in this world; and I still adhere to the assertion, so it was no flattery; and I, being perfectly mad about poetry then, begged of him to let me hear the canto that followed that vivid descrip-

tion, expecting to hear something more about my native mountains. He was then, to humour me, obliged to begin at the beginning of the poem, and that day he read me the two first books.

That night my friends Grieve and Morison, who were as great enthusiasts as myself, expressed themselves so bitterly at my advantage over them, that the next morning I took them both with me, and they heard him read the two middle cantos, which I am sure neither of them will ever forget. When we came to the door, Morison said, "For God's sake, Hogg, don't ring."

"What for?" said I.

"Because I know there will be something so terribly gruff about him, I dare not for my soul go in," said he.

"You never were so far mistaken in your life," said I, "Sir Walter's manner is just kindness personified," and rang the bell.

When the *Lady of the Lake* was mostly, or at least partly in manuscript, he said to me one evening, "I am going to adventure a poem on the public quite different from my two

last, perfectly different in its theme, style, and measure." On which he took the manuscript from his desk, and read me the course of the Fiery Cross, and the Battle of the Trosachs. I said, "I could not perceive any difference at all between the style of that and his former poems, save that, because it was quite new to me, I thought it rather better." He was not quite well pleased with the remark, and was just saying, I would think differently when I had time to peruse the whole poem, when Sir John Hope came in, and I heard no more.

After that, he never read anything more to me before publishing, save one ghost story. His fame became so firmly established that he cared not a fig for the opinions of his literary friends, beforehand. But there was one forenoon he said to me in his study, "I have never durst venture upon a real ghost story, Mr Hogg, but you have published some such thrilling ones of late, that I have been this very day employed in writing one. I assure you, 'It's no little that gars auld Donald pegh,' but yon Lewis

stories of yours frightened me so much, that I could not sleep, and now I have been trying my hand on one, and here it is." He read it; but it did not make a great impression on me, for I do not know, at this moment, not having his works by me, where it is published. It was about the ghost of a lady, and, I think, appeared in the *Abbot* or *Monastery*. He read me also a humorous poem in manuscript, which has never been published that I know of. It was something about finding out the happiest man, and making him a present of a new holland shirt.* Paddy got it, who had never known the good of a shirt. Mr Scott asked me what I thought of it. I said the characters of the various nations were exquisitely hit off, but I thought the winding-up was not so effective as it might have been made.

* It appeared in the "Sale Room," a four-penny literary weekly, published by John Ballantyne. It is a circumstance not generally known, that a communication to this publication signed Christopher Corduroy, was the first thing that attracted Scott's notice to Lockhart, of whom he previously knew nothing.

He said he believed I was perfectly right. I never heard what became of that poem, or whether it was ever published or not, for living in the wilderness, as I have done, for the last twenty years, I know very little of what is going on in the literary world. One of Sir Walter's representatives has taken it upon him to assert, that Sir Walter always held me in the lowest contempt! He never was farther wrong in his life, but Sir Walter would still have been farther wrong if he had done so. Of that, posterity will judge; but I assure that individual, that there never was a gentleman in the world who paid more respect or attention to a friend than Sir Walter did to me, for the space of the thirty years that we were acquainted. True, he sometimes found fault with me, but in that there was more kindness than all the rest.

I must confess, that, before people of high rank, he did not much encourage my speeches and stories. He did not then hang down his brows, as when he was ill-pleased with me, but he raised them up and

glowered, and put his upper lip far over the under one, seeming to be always terrified at what was to come out next, and then he generally cut me short, by some droll anecdote, to the same purport of what I was saying. In this he did not give me fair justice, for, in my own broad homely way, I am a very good speaker, and teller of a story too.

Mrs Hogg was a favourite of his. He always paid the greatest deference and attention to her. When we were married, I, of course, took her down to Abbotsford, and introduced her, and though the company was numerous, he did her the honour of leading her into the dining-room and placing her by his side. When the ladies retired, he, before all our mutual friends present, testified himself highly pleased with my choice, and added, that he wondered how I had the good sense and prudence to make such a one. "I dinna thank ye at a' for the compliment, Sir Walter," said I.

As for her, poor woman, she perfectly adored him. There was one day, when he

was dining with us at Mount Benger, on going away he snatched up my little daughter, Margaret Laidlaw, and kissed her, and then laying his hand on her head, said, "God Almighty bless you, my dear child!" on which my wife burst into tears. On my coming back from seeing him into the carriage, that stood at the base of the hill, I said, "What ailed you, Margaret?"

"O," said she, "I thought if he had but just done the same to them all, I do not know what in the world I would not have given."

There was another year previous to that, when he was dining with me at the same place, he took a great deal of notice of my only son James, trying to find out what was in him, by a number of simple questions, not one of which James would answer. He then asked me anent the boy's capabilities. I said he was a very amiable and affectionate boy, but I was afraid he would never be the Cooper of Fogo, for he seemed to be blessed with a very thick head. "Why, but Mr Hogg, you know, it is not fair to lay the

saddle upon a foal," said he. "I, for my part, never liked precocity of genius all my life, and can venture to predict that James will yet turn out an honour to you and all your kin." I was gratified by the prediction, and lost not a word of it.

The boy had at that time taken a particular passion for knives, particularly for large ones, and to amuse him, Sir Walter showed him a very large gardener's knife, which he had in his pocket, which contained a saw, but I never regarded it, and would not have known it the next day. James, however, never forgot it, and never has to this day, and I should like very well, if that knife is still to be found, that James should have it as a keepsake of his father's warmest and most esteemed friend. Col. Ferguson, perceiving the boy's ruling passion, made him a present of a handsome two-bladed knife. But that made no impression on James. Col. Ferguson he forgot next day, but Sir Walter he never forgot till he came back again, always denominating him, "The man wi' the gude knife."

The last time Margaret saw him, was at his own house in Maitland Street, a very short time before he finally left it. We were passing from Charlotte Square to make a call in Laurieston, when I said, "See, yon is Sir Walter's house, at yon red lamp." "O, let me go in and see him once more!" said she.

"No, no, Margaret," said I, "you know how little time we have, and it would be too bad to intrude on his hours of quiet and study at this time of the day." "O, but I must go in," said she, "and get a shake of his kind, honest hand once more. I cannot go by." So I, knowing that

"Nought's to be won at woman's hand,
Unless ye gie her a' the plea,"

was obliged to comply. In we went, and were received with all the affection of old friends, but his whole discourse was addressed to my wife, while I was left to shift for myself among books and newspapers. He talked to her of our family, and of our prospects of being able to give them a good

education, which he recommended at every risk, and at every sacrifice. He talked to her of his own family one by one, and of Mr Lockhart's family, giving her a melancholy account of little Hugh John Lockhart (the celebrated Hugh Littlejohn), who was a great favourite of his, but whom, as he said that day, he despaired of ever seeing reach manhood.

The only exchange of words I got with him during that short visit, which did not extend to the space of an hour, was of a very important nature indeed. In order to attract his attention from my wife, to one who, I thought, as well deserved it, I went close up to him with a scrutinizing look, and said, "Gudeness guide us, Sir Walter, but ye hae gotten a braw gown!" On which he laughed and said, "I got it made for me in Paris (such a year), when certain great personages chose to call on me of a morning, and I never thought of putting it on since, until the day before yesterday, on finding that my every-day one had been sent to Abbotsford. But I shall always think the

more highly of my braw gown, Mr Hogg, for your notice of it." I think it was made of black twilled satin and lined.

But to return to some general anecdotes, with which I could fill volumes. When I first projected my literary paper, *THE SPY*, I went and consulted him, as I generally did in every thing regarding literature. He shook his head, and let fall his heavy eyebrows, but said nothing. The upper lip came particularly far down. I did not like these prognostics at all ; so I was obliged to broach the subject again, without having received one word in answer.

"Do ye not think it rather dangerous ground to take after Addison, Johnson, and Henry M'Kenzie ?" said he.

"No a bit !" said I, "I am no the least feared for that. My papers may not be sae yelegant as theirs, but I expect to make them mair original."

"Yes, they will certainly be original enough, with a vengeance !" said he.

I asked him if he thought threepence would be a remunerating price ? He an-

swered, with very heavy brows, that, "taking the extent of the sale into proper calculation, he suspected she must be a fourpenny cut." He said this with a sneer which I never could forget. I asked him if he would lend me his assistance in it? He said he would first see how I came on, and if he saw the least prospect of my success, he would support me, and with this answer I was obliged to be content. He only sent me one letter for the work, enclosing two poems of Leyden's. He was, however, right in discouraging it, and I was wrong in adventuring it. I never knew him wrong in any of his calculations or inhibitions but once, and then I am sure my countrymen will join with me in saying that he was wrong. He wrote to me once when I was living in Nithsdale, informing me that he was going to purchase the estate of Broadmeadows, on Yarrow. That he was the highest offerer, and was, he believed, sure of getting it, and that he had offered a half more on my account that I might be his chief shepherd, and manager of all his rural affairs. The plan misgave.

Mr Boyd overbid him and became the pur-chaser, on which Sir Walter was so vexed on my account, I having kept myself out of a place, depending upon his, that he actually engaged me to Lord Porchester, as his chief shepherd, where I was to have a handsome house, a good horse, a small pendicle, rent free, and twenty pounds a year. I approved of the conditions as more than I expected or was entitled to, only they were given with this *proviso*, that "I was to put my poetical talent under lock and key for ever!" I have the letter. Does any body think Sir Walter was right here? I can't believe it, and I am sure my friend, the present Lord Porchester, would have been the last man to have exacted such a stipulation. I spurned the terms and refused to implement the bargain. This is the circum-stance alluded to in the Queen's Wake, as a reflection on Walter the Abbot, which I think it proper to copy here, to save researches for an extract, where it may be impossible to find it. It alludes to the magic harp of Ettrick banks and Yarrow braes.

“ The day arrived—blest be the day,
Walter the Abbot came that way—
The sacred relic met his view ;
Ah, well the pledge of Heaven he knew !
He screwed the chords, he tried a strain,
'Twas wild—he tuned and tried again,
Then pour'd the numbers, bold and free,
The ancient magic melody.
The land was charmed to list his lays,
It knew the harp of ancient days,
The Border Chiefs that long had been
In sepulchres unhearsed and green,
Passed from their mouldy vaults away,
In armour red and stern array ;
And by their moonlit halls were seen,
In visor, helm, and habergeon.
Even fairies sought our land again,
So powerful was the magic strain.
Blest be his generous heart for aye,
He told me where the relic lay,
Pointed my way with ready will
Afar on Ettrick's wildest hill ;
Watched my first notes with curious eye,
And wondered at my minstrelsy.
He little ween'd a parent's tongue
Such strains had o'er my cradle sung !
Oh ! could the bard I loved so long
Reprove my fond aspiring song ?
Or could his tongue of candour say
That I should throw my harp away ;
Just when her notes began with skill
To sound beneath the Southern hill,
And twine around my bosom's core ;
How could we part for evermore ?

'Twas kindness all,—I cannot blame,
For bootless is the minstrel flame.
But sure a bard might well have known
Another's feelings by his own !"

QUEEN'S WAKE.—*6th edit.* p. 336-7.

I never knew any gentleman so shy and chary of his name and interest as Sir Walter was, and though I know Allan Cunningham and Captain J. G. Burns will not join me in this, "let every man roose the ford as he finds it." He never would do any thing for me in that, save by the honour of his un-deviating friendship and genuine good advices, both of which were of great value to me, insuring me a welcome among all the genteel company of the kingdom, and the other tending greatly to guide my path in a sphere with which I was entirely un-acquainted, and these I set a high value on. But he would never bring me forward in any way by the shortest literary remark in any periodical—never would review any of my works, although he once promised to do it. No, he did not promise, he only said before several friends, to whom he had been speaking very highly of the work, that he

was thinking of doing it. But seeing, I suppose, that the poem did not take so well as he had anticipated, he never accomplished his kind intent. I asked him the following year, why he had not fulfilled his promise to me.

“Why, the truth is, Hogg,” said he, “that I began the thing, and took a number of notes, marking extracts, but I found, that to give a proper view of your poetical progress and character, I was under the necessity of beginning with the ballads, and following through THE WAKE and all the rest, and, upon the whole, I felt that we were so much of the same school, that, if I had said of you as I wished to say, I would have been thought by the world to be applauding myself.”

I cannot aver that these were Sir Walter’s very words, but they were precisely to that purport. But I, like other disappointed men, not being by half satisfied with the answer, said, “Dear Sir Walter, ye can never suppose that I belang to your school o’ chivalry! Ye are the king o’ that school,

but I'm the king o' the mountain and fairy school, which is a far higher ane nor yours."

He rather hung down his brows and said, "The higher the attempt to ascend, the greater might be the fall;" and changed the subject by quoting the saying of some old English baronet in a fox-chase.

He paid two high compliments to me, without knowing of either, and although some other person should have related these rather than me, I cannot refrain from it. One of them was derogatory to himself too, a thing which a young poet is not very apt to publish. He was, he said, quarter-master to the Edinburgh gentlemen-cavalry, and composed a song for the corps, got a friend to learn it and sing it at the mess, but it did not take very well. At length a Mr Robertson got up and said, "Come, come, that's but a droo of a song. Let us have Donald M'Donald." On which Donald M'Donald was struck up, and was joined in with such glee that all the mess got up, joined hands, and danced round the table,

and, added Scott, “I joined the ring too and danced as well as I could, and there were four chaps, all of the clan Donachie, who got so elevated that they got upon the top of the table and danced a Highland reel to the song.” He did not know it was mine until after he had told the anecdote, when I said, “Dear man, that sang’s mine, and was written sax or seven years bygane. I wonder ye didna ken that.”

There was another day, as we were walking round the north side of St Andrew’s Square, to call on Sir C. Sharpe in York Place, he said to me, laughing very heartily, “I found Ballantyne in a fine quandary yesterday, as I called on leaving the Parliament House. He was standing behind his desk, actually staring, and his mouth quite open. ‘I am glad you have come in, Mr Scott,’ said he, ‘to tell me if you think I am in my right senses to-day, or that I am in a dream?’ ‘O, it is quite manifest, from the question, that you are not in your right senses!’ said I; ‘what is the matter?’ ‘Here is a poem sent me by Mr Gillies, to

publish in a work of his,' said he; 'It is in his own hand-writing, and the gradation of the ascent is so regular and well-managed, that I am bound to believe it is his. Well, before you came in, I read and read on, in these two proofs, until at last I said to myself, Good Lord, is this the poetry of Mr Gillies that I am reading? I must be asleep and dreaming. And then I bit my little finger, to prove if I was not asleep, and I thought I was not. But sit down and judge for yourself.'

"So James read the poem to me from beginning to end," continued he, "and then said, 'Now, what think you of this?' 'The only thing that I can say,' said I, 'is, that the former part of the poem is very like the writing of a eunuch, and the latter part like that of a man. The style is altogether unknown to me, but Mr Gillies's it cannot be.'" I was sorry I durst not inform him it was mine, for it had been previously agreed between Mr Gillies and me, that no one should know. It was a blank verse poem, but I have entirely forgotten

what it was about ; the latter half only was mine.

“‘So you say that the poetry is not the composition of Mr Gillies?’ said James.

‘Yes, I do, positively. The thing is impossible.’

“‘Well, sir, I can take your word for that ; and I have *not* lost my senses, nor am I dreaming at all.’”

There was one day that I met with him on the North Bridge, on his return from the Court of Session, when he took my arm, and said, “Come along with me, Hogg, I want to introduce you to a real brownie, one who does a great deal of work for me, for which I am paid rather liberally.” I accompanied him into one of the register offices, where a good-looking, little spruce fellow, his deputy clerk, I suppose, produced papers, bunch after bunch, to the amount of some hundreds, all of which he signed with W. SCOTT, laughing and chatting with me all the while. We then took a walk round the Calton Hill, till dinner time, when I went home with him and met Ballantyne and

Terry. I think it was on that day, for it was during a walk round the Calton Hill, and I never enjoyed that pleasure with him but twice in my life, that we were discussing the merits of his several poems. The *Lady of the Lake* had had an unprecedented run previous to that, and as it was really my favourite, I was extolling it highly, assured that I was going on safe ground, but I found that he preferred *Marmion*, and said something to the following effect, That the *Lady of the Lake* would always be the favourite with ladies and people who read merely for amusement, but that *Marmion* would have the preference by real judges of poetry. I have heard people of the first discernment express the same opinion since. For me, I think in *THE LADY OF THE LAKE* he reached his acme in poetry ; for, in fact, the whole both of his poetry and prose have always appeared to me as two splendid arches, of which the *Lady of the Lake* is the key-stone of the one, and *Guy Mannering* and *Old Mortality* the joint key-stones of the other. I should like very well to write

a review of his whole works, but that is quite out of my way at present.

The only other walk that I ever got with him round the Calton Hill was several years subsequent to that. At that time I did not believe that he was the author of the celebrated novels, for Johnnie Ballantyne had fairly sworn me out of my original fixed belief, so I began about them very freely, and he did the same, laughing heartily at some of the jokes, and often standing still and sitting down, and telling me where he thought the author had succeeded best and where least, and there were some places where he did not scruple to say he had failed altogether. He never tried to defend any passage when it was attacked, but generally laughed at the remarks.

There cannot be a better trait of Sir Walter's character than this, that all who knew him intimately, loved him; nay, many of them almost worshipped him. The affection and subservience of the two Messrs Ballantyne far surpassed description. They were entrusted with all his secrets, and all

his transactions, and faithful to the last ; and I know, that had he taken some most serious advices which James gave him, he never would have been involved as he was. In James he always reposed the most implicit confidence. John he likewise trusted with everything, and loved him as a wayward brother, but he often broke a joke at his expense. There was one day I was telling the Sheriff some great secret about the author of a certain work or article, I have quite forgot what it was, when he said, “ I suspect you are widely misinformed there, Mr Hogg, for I think I know the author to be a different person.”

“ Na, na, Mr Scott, you are clean wrang,” said I, “ for Johnnie Ballantyne tauld me, an’ he coudna but ken.”

“ Ay, but ye should hae ascertained whether it was leeing Johnnie or true Johnnie who told you that, before you avouched it ; for they are two as different persons as exist on the face of the earth,” said he. “ Had James told you so, you might have averred it, for James never diverges from the right-

forward truth." As Mr Southey once told me the very same thing, I think I am at liberty to publish the sentiments of two such eminent men, of the amiable deceased. James was a man of pomp and circumstance, but he had a good affectionate heart. It was too good and too kind for this world, and the loss first of his lady, and then of his great patron and friend, broke it, and he followed him instantly to the land of forgetfulness. How strange it is that all connected with those celebrated novels have been hunted off the stage of time, as it were, together! The publisher, the author, the two printers, and, last of all, the corrector of the press, the honest and indefatigable Daniel MacCorkindale,—all gone! and none to tell the secrets of that faithful and devoted little community.

There was no man knew Scott so well as James Ballantyne, and I certainly never knew a man admire and revere a friend and patron so much. If any person ventured to compare other modern productions with those of Scott, he stared with astonishment,

and took it as a personal insult to himself. There was one time, that, in my usual rash, forward way, I said that Miss Ferrier's novels were better than Sir Walter's. James drew himself up; I wish any reader of this had seen his looks of utter astonishment, for he was always a sort of actor, James. "What do I hear? what do I hear?" cried he, with prodigious emphasis, "is it possible that I hear, sir, such a sentiment drop from *your* lips?" I was obliged to burst out a-laughing and run away.

Sir Walter's attached and devoted friends were without number, but William Erskine and James Ballantyne were his constant and daily associates. It is a pity that Ballantyne had not left a written character of him, for he could and would have done him justice. But the interesting part of their correspondence will soon all come to light in Lockhart's life of his illustrious father-in-law. He was the only one I ever knew whom no man, either poor or rich, held at ill-will. I was the only exception myself, that ever came to my knowledge,

but that was only for a short season, and all the while it never lessened his interest in my welfare. I found that he went uniformly on one system. If he could do good to any one, he would do it, but he would do harm to no man. He never resented a literary attack, however virulent, of which there were some at first, but always laughed at them. This showed a superiority of mind and greatness of soul which no other young author is capable of. He never retaliated, but trusted to his genius to overcome all ; and it was not on a bruised reed that he leaned.

Although so shy of his name and literary assistance, which, indeed, he would not grant to any one, on any account, save to Lockhart, yet to poor men of literary merit his purse-strings were always open as far as it was in his power to assist them. I actually knew several unsuccessful authors, who for years depended on his bounty for their daily bread. And then there was a delicacy in his way of doing it which was quite admirable. He gave them some old

papers or old ballads to copy for him, pretending to be greatly interested in them, for which he sent them a supply every week, making them believe that they were reaping the genuine fruit of their own labours.

There was one day when I was chatting with Ballantyne in his office, where I was generally a daily visitor, as well as my illustrious friend, I chanced to say that I never in my life knew a man like Scott, for that I knew to a certainty, he was, at that time, feeling himself a successful author, lending pecuniary assistance to very many unsuccessful ones, and the best thing of all, he never let his left hand know what his right hand was doing.

Ballantyne's face glowed with delight and the tear stood in his eye. "You never were more right in your life," said he, "you never were more right in your life! and I am glad that you know and so duly appreciate the merits of our noble, our invaluable friend. Look here," and with that he turned up his day-book, and added, "some word it seems had reached Scott, that Maturin, the Irish

poet, was lying in prison for a small debt, and here have I, by Mr Scott's orders, been obliged to transmit him a bill of exchange for sixty pounds, and Maturin is never to know from whom or whence it came." I have said it oft, and now say it again for the last time, that those who knew Scott only from the few hundreds, or I might say, hundreds of thousands of volumes to which he has given birth and circulation through the world, knew only one-half of the man, and that not the best half either. As a friend he was sometimes stern, but always candid and sincere, and I always found his counsels of the highest value, if I could have followed them. I was indebted to him for the most happy and splendid piece of humorous ballad poetry which I ever wrote. He said to me one day, after dinner, "It was but very lately, Mr Hogg, that I was drawn by our friend, Kirkpatrick Sharpe, to note the merits of your ballad, 'The Witch of Fife.' There never was such a thing written for genuine and ludicrous humour; but why, in the name of wonder, did you suffer the

gude auld man to be burned skin and bone by the English at Carlisle? (for in the first and second editions that was the issue). I never saw a piece of such bad taste in all my life. What had the poor old carle done to deserve such a fate? Only taken a drappy o' drink too much at another man's expense, which you and I have done often. It is a finale which I cannot bear, and you *must* bring off the old man, by some means or other, no matter how extravagant or ridiculous in such a ballad as yours; but by all means bring off the fine old fellow, for the present termination of the ballad is one which I cannot brook." I went home, and certainly brought off the old man with flying colours, which is by far the best part of the ballad. I never adopted a suggestion of his, either in prose or verse, which did not improve the subject. He knew mankind well. He knew the way to the human heart, and he certainly had the art of leading the taste of an empire, I may say of a world, above all men that ever existed. As long as Sir Walter Scott wrote poetry,

there was neither man nor woman ever thought of either reading or writing any thing but poetry. But the instant that he gave over writing poetry, there was neither man nor woman ever read it more! All turned to tales and novels, which I, among others, was reluctantly obliged to do. Yes, I was obliged, from the tide, the irresistible current that followed him, to forego the talent which God had given me at my birth, and enter into a new sphere with which I had no acquaintance. The world of imagination had been opened wide to me, but the world of real life I knew nothing of. Sir Walter knew it, in all its shades and gradations, and could appreciate any singular character at once. He had a clear head, as well as a benevolent heart; was a good man, an anxiously kind husband, an indulgent parent, and a sincere, forgiving friend, a just judge, and a punctual correspondent. I believe that he answered every letter sent to him, either from rich or poor, and generally not very shortly. Such is the man we have lost, and such a man we

shall never see again. He was truly an extraordinary man—the greatest man in the world. What are kings or emperors compared with him? Dust and sand! And, unless when connected with literary men, the greater part of their names either not remembered at all, or only remembered with detestation. But here is a name, which, next to that of William Shakspeare, will descend with rapt admiration to all the ages of futurity. And is it not a proud boast for an old shepherd, that for thirty years he could call this man friend, and associate with him every day and hour that he chose?

Yes, it is my proudest boast. Sir Walter sought me out in the wilderness, and attached himself to me before I had ever seen him, and although I took cross fits with him, his interest in me never subsided for one day or one moment. He never scrupled to let me know that I behoved to depend entirely on myself for my success in life, but at the same time always assured me that I had talents to

insure that success, if properly applied and not suffered to run to waste. I was always received in his house like a brother, and he visited me on the same familiar footing. I never went into the Inner House of Parliament, where he sat, on which he did not rise and come to me, and conduct me to a seat in some corner of the Outer House, where he would sit with me two or three minutes. I am sorry to think that any of his relations should entertain an idea that Sir Walter undervalued me, for of all men I ever met with, not excepting the noblemen and gentlemen in London, there never was a gentleman paid more deference to me than Sir Walter; and although many of my anecdotes are homely and commonplace ones, I am sure there is not a man in Scotland who appreciates his value more highly, or reveres his memory more.

With regard to his family, I have not much to say, for I know but little. Sophia was a baby when I first visited him, about two or three months old, and I have watched her progress ever since. By the

time she had passed beyond the years of infancy, I perceived that she was formed to be the darling of such a father's heart, and so it proved. She was a pure child of nature, without the smallest particle of sophistication in her whole composition. And then she loved her father so. O! how dearly she loved him ! I shall never forget the looks of affection that she would throw up to him as he stood leaning on his crutch, and hanging over her at the harp, as she chanted to him his favourite old Border Ballads, or his own wild Highland gatherings. Whenever he came into a room where she was, her countenance altered, and she often could not refrain from involuntary laughter. She is long ago a wife and mother herself, but I am certain she will always cherish the memory of the most affectionate of fathers.

Walter is a fine, manly, gentlemanly fellow, without pride or affectation, but without the least spark of his father's genius that I ever could discern ; and for all the literary company that he mixed with daily in his youth, he seemed always to hold

literature, and poetry in particular, in very low estimation. He was terribly cast down at his father's death. I never saw a face of such misery and dejection, and though I liked to see it, yet I could not help shedding tears on contemplating his features, thinking of the jewel that had fallen from his crown.

I always considered Anne as the cleverest of the family ; shrewd, sensible, and discerning, but I believe a little of a satirist, for I know that when a mere girl, her associates were terrified for her. Charles is a queer chap, and will either make a spoon or spoil a good horn.

Of Lockhart's genius and capabilities, Sir Walter always spoke with the greatest enthusiasm ; more than I thought he deserved, for I knew him a great deal better than Sir Walter did, and whatever Lockhart may pretend, I knew Sir Walter a thousand times better than he did. There is no man now living who knew Scott's character so thoroughly in all its bearings as William Laidlaw did. He was his land steward, his

amanuensis, and managed the whole of his rural concerns and improvements for the period of twenty years, and sorry am I that the present Sir Walter did not find it meet to keep Laidlaw on the estate, for without him, that dear-bought and classical property will be like a carcase without a head. Laidlaw's head made it. He knows the value of every acre of land on it to a tithe, and of every tree in the forest, with the characters of all the neighbours and retainers. He was, to be sure, a subordinate, but Sir Walter always treated him as a friend, inviting Mrs Laidlaw and him down to every party where there was any body he thought Laidlaw would like to meet, and Sir Walter called on Mrs Laidlaw once or twice every day when he was in the country. I have seen him often pop in to his breakfast and take his salt herring and tea with us there, with as much ease and good humour as if he had come into his brother's house. He once said to me, as we were walking out about Abbotslee, and I was so much interested in the speech that I am sure I can

indite it word by word, for Laidlaw was one of my earliest and dearest friends :

“ Was it not an extraordinary chance for me that threw Laidlaw into my hands ? Without Laidlaw’s head I could have done nothing ; and to him alone I am indebted for all these improvements. I never found a mind so inexhaustible as Laidlaw’s. I have met with many of the greatest men of our country, but uniformly found, that after sounding them on one or two subjects, there their information terminated. But with the worst of all manners of expression, Laidlaw’s mind is inexhaustible. Its resources seem to be without end. Every day, every hour, he has something new, either of theory or experiment, and he sometimes abuses me like a tinkler because I refuse to follow up his insinuations.”

Another day he said to me, “ You know I recommended your friend Laidlaw last year to Lord Mansfield as his factor, but was obliged to withdraw my recommendation, and give his lordship a hint to relinquish his choice. For in the first place I was afraid

that Laidlaw's precarious health might unfit him for such a responsible situation; and more than that, I found that I could not live without him, and was obliged, maugre all misfortunes, to replace him in his old situation." I therefore wish, from my heart and soul, that matters could have been so arranged, that Laidlaw should not have been separated from Abbotsford; for though my own brother has long had and still has a high responsibility as shepherd and superintendent of the enclosures, I cannot see how the management of the estate can go on without Laidlaw. Under the law agents it will both cost more and go to ruin, and I say again, without Laidlaw that grand classical estate is a carcase without a head.

Whenever Sir Walter spoke of either of his two sons, which he frequently did, it was always in a jocular way, to raise a laugh at their expense. His description of Walter, when he led in Mrs Lockhart a bride, with his false mustachios and whiskers, was a source of endless amusement to him. He

was likewise wont often to quote some of Charles's wise sayings, which, in the way that he told them, never failed to set the table in a roar of laughter.

Sir Walter had his caprices like other men, and when in poor health was particularly cross, but I always found his heart in the right place, and that he had all the native feelings and generosity of a man of true genius. I am ashamed to confess that his feelings for individual misfortune were far more intense than my own. There was one day that I went in to breakfast with him as usual, when he said to me, with eyes perfectly staring, "Good Heaven! Hogg, have you heard what has happened?"

"Na, no that I ken o', what is it that ye allude to, Mr Scott?"

"That our poor friend Irving has cut his throat last night or this morning, and is dead."

"O, ay! I heard o' that," said I with a coldness that displeased him. "But I never heedit it, for the truth is that Irving was joost like the Englishman's fiddle; the warst

fault that he had, he was useless. Irving could never have done any good either for himself, his family, or any other leevin' creature."

"I don't know, Mr. Hogg, what that poor fellow might have done, with encouragement. This you must at least acknowledge, that if he did not write genuine poetry, he came the nearest to it of any man that ever failed." These were Sir Walter's very words, and I record them in memory of the hapless victim of despair and disappointed literary ambition. He farther added, "For me, his melancholy fate has impressed me so deeply, and deranged me so much, that it will be long before I can attend to anything again."

He abhorred all sorts of low vices and blackguardism with a perfect detestation. There was one Sunday when he was riding down Yarrow, in his carriage, attended by several gentlemen on horseback, and I being among them went up to the carriage door, and he being our Sheriff, I stated to him with the deepest concern that there was at that moment a cry of *murder* from the

Broadmeadows wood, and that Will Watherston was murdering Davie Brunton. "Never you regard that, Hogg," said he, with rather a stern air, and without a smile on his countenance. "If Will Watherston murders Davie Brunton, and be hanged for the crime, it is the best thing that can befall to the parish—drive on, Peter."

He was no great favourer of sects, and seldom or never went to church. He was a complete and finished aristocrat, and the prosperity of the state was his great concern, which prosperity he deemed lost unless both example and precept flowed by regular gradation from the highest to the lowest. He dreaded religion as a machine by which the good government of the country might be deranged, if not uprooted. There was one evening when he and Morrit of Rokeby, some of the Fergusons, and I were sitting over our wine, that he said, "There is nothing that I dread so much as a very religious woman ; she is not only a dangerous person, but a perfect shower-bath on all social conviviality. The enthusiasm of our

Scottish ladies has now grown to such a height that I am almost certain it will lead to some dangerous revolution in the state. And then, to try to check it would only make the evil worse. If you ever choose a wife, Hogg, for goodness' sake, as you value your own happiness, don't choose a *very* religious one."

He had a settled impression on his mind that a revolution was impending over this country, even worse than we have experienced, and he was always keeping a sharp look-out on the progress of enthusiasm in religion, as a dangerous neighbour. There was one day that he and Laidlaw were walking in the garden at Abbotsford, during the time that the western portion of the mansion-house was building. The architect's name, I think, was Mr Paterson.

"Well, do you know, Laidlaw," said Scott, "that I think Paterson one of the best natured, shrewd, sensible fellows that I ever met with. I am quite delighted with him, for he is a fund of continual amusement to me. If you heard but how I torment him !

I attack him every day on the fundamental principles of his own art. I take a position which I know to be false, and persist in maintaining it, and it is truly amazing with what good sense and good nature he supports his principles. I really like Paterson exceedingly."

"O he's a verra fine fellow," said Laidlaw, "an' extraordinar fine fellow, an' has a great deal o' comings an' gangings in him. But dinna ye think, Mr Scott, that it's a great pity he should hae been a preacher?"

"A preacher?" said Scott, staring at him.
"Good Lord! what do you mean?"

"Aha! It's a' ye ken about it!" said Laidlaw, "I assure you he's a preacher, an' a capital preacher too. He's reckoned the best Baptist preacher in a' Galashiels, an' preaches every Sunday to a great community o' low kind o' folks.

On hearing this, Sir Walter (then Mr Scott,) wheeled about and halted off with a swiftness Laidlaw had never seen him exercise before; exclaiming vehemently to himself, "Preaches! D—— him!" From that

time forth, his delightful colloquies with Mr Paterson ceased.

There was another time at Abbotsford, when some of the Sutherland family, (for I don't remember the English title,) and many others were there, that we were talking of the Earl of Buchan's ornamental improvements at Dryburgh, and among other things, of the colossal statue of Wallace, which I rather liked and admired, but which Sir Walter perfectly abhorred; he said these very words; "if I live to see the day when the men of Scotland, like the children of Israel, shall every one do that which is right in his own eyes, *which I am certain either I or my immediate successors will see*, I have settled in my own mind long ago what I shall do first. I'll go down and blow up the statue of Wallace with gunpowder. Yes, I shall blow it up in such a style, that there shall not be one fragment of it left! the horrible monster!" He had a great veneration for the character of Sir William Wallace, and I have often heard him eulogise it. He said to me one morning

long ago, when Miss Porter's work, *The Scottish Chiefs*, first appeared, "I am grieved about this work of Miss Porter! I cannot describe to you how much I am disappointed, I wished to think so well of it; and I do think highly of it as a work of genius. But, Lord help her! her Wallace is no more our Wallace, than Lord Peter is, or King Henry's messenger to Percy Hotspur. It is not safe meddling with the hero of a country, and, of all others, I cannot bear to see the character of Wallace frittered away to that of a fine gentleman."

Sir Walter was the best formed man I ever saw, and, laying his weak limb out of the question, a perfect model of a man for gigantic strength. The muscles of his arms were prodigious. I remember of one day long ago, I think it was at some national dinner in Oman's Hotel, that at a certain time of the night, a number of the young heroes differed prodigiously with regard to their various degrees of muscular strength. A general measurement took place around the shoulders and chest, and I, as a par-

ticular judge in these matters, was fixed on as the measurer and umpire. Scott, who never threw cold water on any fun, submitted to be measured with the rest. He measured most round the chest, and, to their great chagrin, I was next to him, and very little short. But when I came to examine the arms, Sir Walter's had double the muscular power of mine, and very nearly so of every man's who was there! I declare, that from the elbow to the shoulder, they felt as if he had the strength of an ox.

There was a gentleman once told me that he walked into Sir Walter's house, in Castle Street, just as the footman was showing another gentleman out, and that, being an intimate acquaintance, he walked straight into Sir Walter's study, where he found him stripped, with his shirt sleeves rolled up to his shoulders, and his face very red. "Good Heaven, Scott, what is the matter?" said the intruder. "Pray, may I ask an explanation of this?" "Why, the truth is, that I have just been giving your friend, Mr Martin, a complete drubbing," said Scott laughing.

“ The scoundrel dared me to touch him but with one of my fingers ; but if I have not given him a thorough basting, he knows himself. He is the most impudent and arrant knave I ever knew. But I think it will be a while before he attempts to impose again upon me.” This Mr Martin, the gentleman said, was some great picture dealer. But as I never heard Sir Walter mention the feat in his hours of hilarity, I am rather disposed to discredit the story. He was always so reasonable and so prudent, that I hardly think he would fall on and baste even a knavish picture dealer black and blue, in his own study. The gentleman who told me this is alive, and well, and may answer for himself in this matter.

Sir Walter in his study, and in his seat in the Parliament House, had rather a dull, heavy appearance, but in company his countenance was always lighted up, and Chantrey has given the likeness of him there precisely. In his family he was kind, condescending, and attentive, but highly imperative. No one of them durst for a moment disobey his

orders, and if he began to hang down his eyebrows, a single hint was enough. In every feature of his face decision was strongly marked. He was exactly what I conceive an old Border Baron to have been, with his green jacket, his blue bonnet, his snow-white locks, muscular frame, and shaggy eyebrows.

He was said to be a very careless composer, yet I have seen a great number of his manuscripts, corrected and enlarged on the white page which he alternately left, a plan which I never tried in my life. He once undertook to correct the press for a work of mine, "The Three Perils of Women," when I was living in the country, and when I gave the manuscript to Ballantyne, I said, "Now you must send the proofs to Sir Walter, he is to correct them for me."

"He correct them for you!" exclaimed Ballantyne, "Lord help you and him both! I assure you if he had nobody to correct after him, there would be a bonny song through the country. He is the most careless and incorrect writer that ever was born, for a voluminous and popular writer, and as

for sending a proof sheet to him, we may as well keep it in the office. He never heeds it. No, no, you must trust the correction of the press to my men and me ; I shall answer for them, and if I am in a difficulty at any time, I'll apply to Lockhart. He is a very different man, and has the best eye for a corrector, of any gentleman corrector I ever saw. He often sends me an article written off-hand like your own, without the interlineation of a word, or the necessity of correcting one afterwards. But as for Sir Walter, he will never look at either your proofs or his own, unless it be for a minute's amusement."

The Whig ascendancy in the British Cabinet killed Sir Walter. Yes, I say and aver, it was that which broke his heart, deranged his whole constitution, and murdered him. As I have shown before, a dread of revolution had long preyed on his mind ; he withstood it to the last ; he fled from it, but it affected his brain, and killed him. From the moment he perceived the veto of a democracy prevailing, he lost all hope of the

prosperity and ascendancy of the British empire. He not only lost hope of the realm, but of every individual pertaining to it, as my last anecdote of him will show, for though I could multiply these anecdotes and remarks to volumes, yet I must draw them to a conclusion. They are trivial in the last degree, did they not relate to so great and so good a man. I have depicted him exactly as he was, as he always appeared to me, and was reported by others, and I revere his memory as that of an elder brother.

The last time that I saw his loved and honoured face was at the little inn on my own farm, in the autumn of 1830. He sent me word that he was to pass on such a day, on his way from Drumlanrig Castle to Abbotsford, but he was sorry he could not call at Altrive, to see Mrs Hogg and the bairns, it being so far off the way. I accordingly waited at the inn, and handed him out of the carriage. His daughter was with him, but we left her at the inn, and walked slowly down the way as far as Mountbenger Burn. He then walked very

ill indeed, for the weak limb had become almost completely useless ; but he leaned on my shoulder all the way, and did me the honour of saying that he never leaned on a firmer or a surer.

We talked of many things, past, present, and to come, but both his memory and onward calculation appeared to me then to be considerably decayed. I cannot tell what it was, but there was something in his manner that distressed me. He often changed the subject very abruptly, and never laughed. He expressed the deepest concern for my welfare and success in life, more than I had ever heard him do before, and all mixed with sorrow for my worldly misfortunes. There is little doubt that his own were then preying on his vitals. He told me that which I never knew nor suspected before ; that a certain game-keeper, on whom he bestowed his maledictions without reserve, had prejudiced my best friend, the young Duke of Buccleuch, against me by a story ; and though he himself knew it to be a malicious and invidious lie, yet seeing his grace so

much irritated, he durst not open his lips on the subject, farther than by saying, “But, my lord duke, you must always remember that Hogg is no ordinary man, although he may have shot a stray moorcock.” And then turning to me he said, “Before you had ventured to give any saucy language to a low scoundrel of an English game-keeper, you should have thought of Fielding’s tale of Black George.”

“I never saw that tale,” said I, “an’ dinna ken ought about it. But never trouble your head about that matter, Sir Walter, for it is awthegither out o’ nature for our young chief to entertain ony animosity against me. The thing will never mair be heard of, an’ the chap that tauld the lees on me will gang to hell, that’s aye some comfort.”

I wanted to make him laugh, but I could not even make him smile. “You are still the old man, Hogg, careless and improvident as ever,” said he, with a countenance as gruff and demure as could be.

Before we parted I mentioned to him my plan of trusting an edition of my prose tales,

in twenty volumes, to Lockhart's editing. He disapproved of the plan decidedly, and said, "I would not for anything in the world, that Lockhart should enter on such a responsibility, for taking your random way of writing into account, the responsibility would be a very heavy one—ay, and a dangerous one too!" Then turning half round, leaning on his crutch, and fixing his eyes on the ground for a long space, he said, "You have written a great deal that might be made available, Hogg, with proper attention. And I am sure that one day or other, it will be made available to you or your family. But in my opinion, this is not the proper season. I wish you could drive off the experiment until the affairs of the nation are in better keeping, for at present all things, and literature in particular, are going straight down-hill to destruction and ruin." And then he mumbled something to himself, which I took to be an inward curse. I say again, and I am certain of it, that the democratic ascendancy, and the grievous and shameful insults he received from the

populace of his own country, broke the heart of, and killed the greatest man that ever that country contained.

When I handed him into the coach that day, he said something to me which, in the confusion of parting, I forgot ; and though I tried to recollect the words the next minute, I could not, and never could again. It was something to the purport that it was likely it would be long ere he leaned as far on my shoulder again, but there was an expression in it, conveying his affection for me, or his interest in me, which has escaped my memory for ever.

This is my last anecdote of my most sincere and esteemed friend. After this I never saw him again. I called twice at Abbotsford, during his last illness, but they would not let me see him, and I did not at all regret it, for he was then reduced to the very lowest state of weakness to which poor prostrate humanity could be subjected. He was described to me by one who saw him often, as exactly in the same state with a man mortally drunk, who could in nowise own or

assist himself; the pressure of the abcess on the brain having apparently the same effect as the fumes of drunkenness. He could, at short intervals, distinguish individuals, and pronounce a few intelligible words; but these lucid glimpses were of short duration, the sunken eye soon ceased again from distinguishing objects, and the powerless tongue became unable to utter a syllable, though constantly attempting it, which made the sound the most revolting that can be conceived.

I am sure heaven will bless Lockhart for his attention to the illustrious sufferer. The toil and the watching that he patiently endured, one would have thought was beyond human nature to have stood, and yet I never saw him look better or healthier all the while. He will not miss his reward. I followed my friend's sacred remains to his last narrow house, remained the last man at the grave, and, even then, left it with reluctance.

Omnis eodem cogimur : omnium
Vesatur urna, serius, ocyus
Sors exitura.

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